

Remarks

The above Amendments and these Remarks are in reply to the Office Action mailed June 14, 2004. The fee for addition of new claims is included herewith. A Petition for Extension of Time is also submitted herewith, together with the appropriate fee.

I. Summary of Examiners Rejections

Prior to the Office Action mailed June 14, 2004, Claims 1-20 were pending in the Application. In the Office Action mailed June 14, 2004, Claims 1-3, 5-13 and 15-20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Chaar et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,960,404, hereafter Chaar). Claims 4 and 14 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Chaar.

II. Summary of Applicants' Amendment

The present Response amends Claims 1, 4-8, 10, 11, 14- 18 and 20; cancels Claims 2, 3, 12 and 13; and adds new Claims 21-26, leaving for the Examiner's present consideration Claims 1, 4-11 and 14-26. Reconsideration of the Application, as amended, is respectfully requested.

Applicant reserves the right to prosecute any originally presented or canceled claims in a continuing or future application.

III. Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e)

In the Office Action mailed June 14, 2004, claims 1-3, 5-13 and 15-20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Chaar (U.S. Patent No. 5,960,404).

Claim 1

Claim 1 has been amended by the current Response to more clearly define the embodiment of the invention therein. As amended, Claim 1 defines:

1. *(Currently Amended) A workflow integration system for a collaboration system that allows for sharing of workflow information among a plurality of collaboration participants, comprising:*

a plurality of collaboration participants;
a workflow server on each collaboration participant having stored thereon a participant workflow, wherein said participant workflow specifies the workflow process information for a project local to that collaboration participant;
a collaboration server having stored thereon and managing an enterprise workflow that includes process information for the combined participant workflows; and
an integration logic that allows one of said participant workflows to interact with another participant workflow via the enterprise workflow of the collaboration server, to affect the local projects running thereon.

Claim 1, as currently amended, defines a system that allows for sharing of workflow information among a plurality of collaboration participants. In the embodiment defined by Claim 1, each participant includes a participant workflow that specifies the workflow process information for a project local to that collaboration participant. An enterprise workflow includes process information for the combined participant workflows. A participant workflow interacts with another participant workflow via the enterprise workflow to affect the local projects running thereon. Applicant respectfully submits that these features are not disclosed by the cited references.

Chaar discloses a mechanism for heterogeneous, peer-to-peer, and disconnected workflow execution across a network infrastructure. Chaar apparently discloses a system wherein two autonomous heterogeneous workflow systems or servers can interact by instantiating workflow scripts on each other. As shown in Figure 12, a parent workflow script executing on a workflow server may contain a child workflow or a sub workflow whose script resides in the workflow template repository of a remote workflow server. (Column 12, Lines 32-38). This appears to suggest that, in Chaar, the workflow on the remote server is not local to the project on remote server, but is rather a part (i.e. a sub or child) of the project on the parent workflow server.

However, in the embodiment of the invention defined by claim 1, as currently amended, each participant workflow specifies the workflow process information for a project local to that collaboration participant.

Furthermore, as disclosed in Chaar, the workflow system therein does not appear to include an enterprise workflow that includes process information for the combined participant workflows.

Nor does Chaar appear to disclose a source (participant) work flow interacting with a performer (another participant) workflow via an enterprise workflow. Instead, Chaar appears to disclose a workflow with workflow requests distributed across the source and performers.

However, in the embodiment defined by claim 1, as currently amended, a collaboration server includes an enterprise workflow that includes process information for the combined participant workflows; and that allows one of said participant workflows to interact with another participant workflow via the enterprise workflow, to affect the local projects running thereon. Thus, a participant workflow interacts with another participant workflow via the enterprise workflow of the collaboration server to affect the local projects running on those participants.

In view of the above comments, Applicant respectfully submits that Claim 1 is neither anticipated by, nor obvious in view of the cited references, and reconsideration thereof is respectfully requested.

Claims 2 and 3

Claims 2 and 3 are canceled by the current response, rendering moot the rejection of these claims.

Claims 5-10

Claims 5-10 are not addressed separately but it is respectfully submitted that these claims are allowable as depending from an allowable independent claim and further in view of the comments provided above. Applicant respectfully submits that Claims 5-10 are similarly neither anticipated by, nor obvious in view of the cited references, and reconsideration thereof is respectfully requested.

It is also submitted that these claims also add their own limitations which render them patentable in their own right. Applicant reserves the right to argue these limitations should it become necessary in the future.

Claim 11

The comments provided above with respect to Claim 1 are incorporated herein by reference. Claim 11 has been similarly amended to more clearly define the invention as including steps of storing an enterprise workflow on a collaboration server, wherein said enterprise workflow includes process information for a plurality of participant workflows; storing a participant workflow on each collaboration participant server, wherein said participant workflow specifies the workflow process information for a project local to that collaboration participant; and, providing an integration logic that allows one of said participant workflows to interact with another participant workflow via the enterprise workflow of the collaboration server, to affect the local projects running thereon.

In view of the above-described amendments to Claim 11, and for similar reasons as given above with respect to Claim 1, Applicant respectfully submits that Claim 11 is similarly neither anticipated by, nor obvious in view of the cited references, and reconsideration thereof is respectfully requested.

Claims 12 and 13

Claims 12 and 13 are canceled by the current response, rendering moot the rejection of these claims.

Claims 15-20

Claims 15-20 are not addressed separately but it is respectfully submitted that these claims are allowable as depending from an allowable independent claim and further in view of the comments provided above. Applicant respectfully submits that Claims 15-20 are similarly neither anticipated by, nor obvious in view, of the cited references, and reconsideration thereof is respectfully requested.

It is also submitted that these claims also add their own limitations which render them patentable in their own right. Applicant reserves the right to argue these limitations should it become necessary in the future.

IV. Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Claims 4 and 14

In the Office Action mailed June 14, 2004, Claims 4 and 14 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Chaar as applied to Claims 1-3, 5-13 and 15-20.

Claims 4 and 14 are not addressed separately but it is respectfully submitted that these claims are allowable as depending from an allowable independent claim and further in view of the amendments to Claims 1 and 11, and the comments provided above. Applicant respectfully submits that Claims 4 and 14 are similarly neither anticipated by, nor obvious in view, of the cited references, and reconsideration thereof is respectfully requested.

It is also submitted that these claims also add their own limitations which render them patentable in their own right. Applicant reserves the right to argue these limitations should it become necessary in the future.

V. Additional Amendments

Claims 21-26

Claims 21-26 have been newly added by the present Response. Applicant respectfully requests that new Claims 21-26 be included in the Application and considered therewith.

VI. Conclusion

In view of the above amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that all of the Claims now pending in the subject patent application should be allowable, and reconsideration thereof is respectfully requested. The Examiner is respectfully requested to telephone the undersigned if he can assist in any way in expediting issuance of a patent.


Enclosed is a PETITION FOR EXTENSION OF TIME UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.136 for extending the time to respond up to and including today, October 14, 2004.

Application No. 09/785,862
Response to OA dated: June 14, 2004
Response/Amendment dated: October 14, 2004

The Commissioner is authorized to charge any underpayment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 06-1325 for any matter in connection with this response, including any fee for extension of time, which may be required.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: October 14, 2004

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